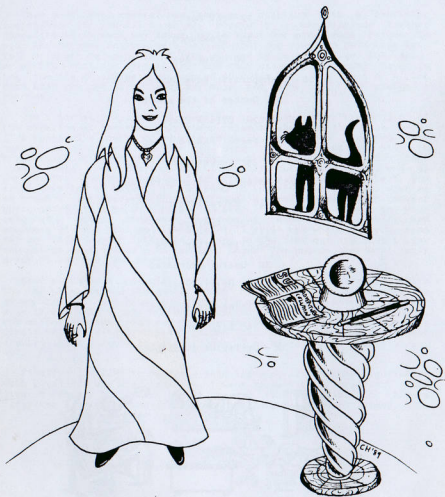


# ADVENTURE CODER

October '89 Issue 4 £1



## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Price per single issue:

- £1.00 United Kingdom
- £1.75 Europe (+ S.Ireland)
- £1.75 Rest of the world (surface)
- £2.25 Rest of the world (air mail)



Price per 12 issues (1 year):

- £12.00 United Kingdom
- £21.00 Europe (+ S.Ireland)
- £21.00 Rest of the world (surface)
- £27.00 Rest of the world (air mail)



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- £5.00 Inside full page (black-and-white A5)
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The opinions expressed within this magazine by individual writers are not necessarily shared by the Editor. Adventure Coder does not recommend or condone any particular firm or product.

Issues of Adventure Coder come out during the middle of each month. The deadline for contributions is the last day of the previous month.

Software and hardware is greatly appreciated for review purposes no matter what computer it is for. Adventure writing utilities are especially welcome.

Adventure Coder is produced on a Commodore 64 with a Star LC10C printer using a variety of programs.

PUBLISHER: Mandy Rodrigues

 Commodore

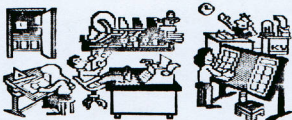
 THE STAR  
COMPUTER PRINTERS

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## BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

Okay, it's late! I agree - what's a magazine marked October doing out in November!? Well, better late than never! There are two reasons for the delay: firstly, my Publisher moved house so I was unsure of her new address for a while, and secondly I held back until, as you can tell, I got hold of my new printer! I hope you agree the magazine looks even better now! So those are my excuses for a late issue! However, I've been using the extra time to improve the magazine as much as possible, so I trust you'll find this the best issue yet - and I'm still looking for ways to improve it!

This month sees several new features, starting with a fantastic competition for you all to enter. Hopefully I can include further competitions in each new issue, so look out for more mega prizes to win! Another new feature is a regular spot for your own FREE Line Ads. Tell me which category you'd like your ad to go under (i.e. FOR SALE, or WANTED, etc) and send it in!! The only stipulation I must have is that the ads should be a maximum of 40 words long, but that's a lot more than you get with the glossy mags, and some of them charge a fortune!

Don't forget you can also advertise in a much larger proportion of the magazine at the extremely cheap rates as shown on the back page. I've received a couple of adverts recently that have included very weakly printed text - bear in mind that your advert will be photocopied TWICE before it gets sent out with "Coder", so any text that's faint and missing the tops off the words will end up unreadable!! For this reason, I am offering to type up any text you might have for an advert, if you send it in written out as you wish me to print it (or preferably in draft mode). Also, why send your advert photocopied? It'd be much better to send it in pasted up as on your original - again, constant photocopying reduces the clarity and boldness of your text and drawings! I'll still use whatever you send me, but it's in your interests to send in the best quality advert you can manage, and please - no coloured paper! The copier will only print it out grey and murky!!

Next month sees hopefully the first in a series of interviews with the top names behind the games, plus my article on atmosphere in adventures, delayed from this issue I'm afraid. Then there's another dose of PAW Prints, another set of useful routines from Darren Rose, and a look at ways to expand the lastability of your adventure, in Gerald Kellett's "Utilitarian" column that starts this month. Rest assured issue 5 won't be late, though, I've already pasted some of it up!!

Finally, I'd like to dedicate this issue to Alan Murphy, guitarist with Level 42, who died recently. I went to see this brilliant band live in January this year, and it seemed the potential for Alan's future as a talented musician within the band looked very bright...



Dear Chris,

Although you sent me Adventure Coder #1 some time ago, I've only now found time to sit down and write to you.

The content of issue 1, I found mixed. Those parts that struck me as good were 'PAW Prints', which contained one or two useful ideas, (even if it did lead off with the same exit routine that I wrote for Adventure Contact back in June '87!), 'GAC to the Drawing Board', which again contained some good practical hints, and the GAC+ review; it was nice to see someone fairly informed criticising a utility for once. Makes a change from all the adulation STAC got, for example, with hardly a negative comment. Most of its reviews of course, came from people with little or no experience of actually using adventure-writing utilities, and as such most of the reviews seemed to me to lack depth. STAC's a good utility, but far from perfect. But I'm digressing. I was talking about your GAC material. Although you came over as knowing what you're talking about, I feel GAC is a little long in the tooth these days. As you say yourself, "the 8-bit adventure market is shrinking yearly", and when was the last time you saw a GACed game reviewed anywhere? I think if you rely on too much GAC material, you'll be somewhat out of touch. STAC, of course, is another matter, having more potential than anything else we've seen so far in the utility world, despite my comments above.

Other parts of the zine struck me as middling, such as the Machine Code section, the story and 'Whatever happened to...?'. I'm not sure who Paul Brunyee's Machine Code article was aimed at. Anyone who needs to be shown methods of printing strings to the screen etc, is unlikely to consider writing an

adventure completely in assembly or would probably lack the confidence to 'bolt on' routines to the established utilities. Conversely, anyone who feels up to tackling modifying a utility or writing something in assembly from scratch would probably only need a hand with more advanced routines. Perhaps, Paul would consider either taking a less ambitious view, starting with the basics of assembly, without the intention of creating a complete adventure or whatever, or do the opposite and help out with some more involved areas of coding.

'The Burning Man' story was OK, perhaps the most interesting thing being the idea that hell is the continuation of your method of death. That might make the basis of a good game, if it were expanded.

'Whatever happened to...?' was quite interesting, but then nostalgia always is. Ahh, TKV, when computers were real computers. Disk drives - pah, three-digit memory sizes - pah. When ah were a lad, there were only one kind of computer, and that were Hovis (la da daa, la da dee...)

The one or two bits and pieces left besides the news and the bits of addresses, were, as far as I'm concerned, not worth the death of the trees that formed their pages. This included 'Rollin' Ball', the crossword, the 'Food Chart' and the excuse for a poem. I can see it now - Adventure, Coder, inspired by Woman's Weekly! Bloody hell.

But anyway, I think I've rambled on enough for now. Good luck with future issues; I hope you can build on the good points of the first. Something you're going to need of course, is a few more contributors. Normally, I'd write something for you, but all my efforts are going towards my own zine at the moment, (I'll resist the temptation to plug.)

I hope Coder gets the support it deserves.

Alistair G. Thomas, East Lothian.

*You say I'm going to need more contributors, then you opt out yourself! "Normally, I'd write something for you, but..." I hope other readers don't feel content in wishing Adventure Coder well, but not having the will to write in with an article, or there'll be no magazine! I appreciate you're setting up your own magazine (I hate the term "zine") so I guess you could be excused there, Alistair. Even so, if you were unwilling to send in an article, at least you sent in a letter. Let's have more letters still, please!*



Dear Chris,

If you care to, you can put my name and address in the 'Columnist list, as I am now the Games Software Editor of CPC USER. This is the magazine of THE UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP.

I am more than willing to review adventure games in my column, providing they are also accompanied by a map and full solution.

All the best, and keep up the good work.

John Packham, Southampton.

P.S. If anyone writes requesting help with using ADLAN, then I'm more than happy to help in any way I can.

*With any luck, John should also be starting soon to contribute articles on using Graduate Software's ADLAN utility for the Amstrad CPC. Why not send him a game to review too? I'll include the address at the back in my list of Useful Addresses.*

Dear Chris,

you won't like me after this but nevertheless I'm afraid I'm going to have to call it a day as far as writing for "AC" is considered. I realise that this could prove to be quite awkward for you but I don't really have a great deal of choice in the matter. I've just started doing my A-levels and I've really been amazed at the amount of extra work it requires. So much in fact that there just isn't as much time left for me to do everything I'd like and writing for "AC" just happens to be one of the casualties of this. Thanks for the opportunity in the first place but I'm afraid that's it now.

Matthew Conway, Lambourn.

*You win some, you lose some! I was looking forward so much to further regular articles from Matthew on role-playing games and using STAC, spiced with his sense of humour sadly lacking from other articles in the magazine. I'm now looking for a new STAC columnist, so if you use STAC and can string a sentence together, get writing!!*



Dear Chris,

Well done, for the best Adventure Coder so far. I hope it can keep expanding for a few issues, with more readers letters, more articles and hopefully more reviews.

In response to Gerald Kellett's letter in Issue 3 I hope you will keep the content of the magazine as it is at present. PEM games are nothing to do with adventure games and RPGs are one of my pet hates. The glossy, newstand magazines cover these subjects already.

However, another of Mr Kellett's suggestions is, I think, an excellent one. That is the suggestion of an association of independent software producers. If anybody is willing to form such an association/group I would definitely join it. Benefits would be numerous, one of the best I could think of is that advertisements in large circulation magazines could be bought, with joint financing and several games mentioned in one advert. If any software writer/producer out there is

willing to start something on these lines please write to me.

Patrick Walsh, c/o Mental Image,  
36 Verney Road, Langley, Slough,  
Berkshire, SL3 8NX.

"I was very impressed with your magazine, it was well written and the duplication was of a good standard, it was also a lot fatter than I expected! I wish you all the best with your magazine and hope it goes from strength to strength, as it deserves to." - Keith McLeman, Fraserburgh.

N E W S

## COMPUTER CHAOS?

In a recent report, a claim was made that the new TV station "Channel 5" is set to broadcast at a frequency the same as that used by video recorders and... computers! The result would therefore be chaotic to say the least - your VCRs would no longer function properly and all home computers would be impossible to use, as the signal they transmit will be wiped out by that of Channel 5!

Whether or not the report is true is a matter for the future to reveal, however, if it were true it would undoubtedly mean misery for thousands of VCR and home computer users unable to enjoy their hobby. All hardware would subsequently have to be returned to use a different frequency, and there is doubt about who will foot the bill there!

Myself, I don't believe the report - if it were true, then the channel would fail to operate itself! - none of the computers used in making TV programmes would be usable, and the VCRs used to store future programmes on video tape, the staple diet of modern TV visuals, would be out of order! So how could Channel 5 hope to run? We await further news... (it isn't April, so it can't be an April Fool...)

## LEVEL 9 QUIT!

It's true - the giants of adventuring are quitting adventures! At first, they announced that future games wouldn't be available on 8-bit computers anymore, but now it is clear that any future Level 9 games won't even be adventures! They'll be arcade games and RPG games, written using their new H.U.G.E. programming system, standing for WHolly Universal Games Engine - shouldn't that be W.U.G.E.? The technical specifications of the system are large, but useless if it can't write an adventure! Bring back the days of the humble Speccy text-only adventure game I say.



The Amiga version of STOS, the game-creator from Mandarin Software, is due out soon, to be called AMOS. By 'eck! The delay in releasing an Amiga version can only mean that Mandarin have taken time to improve upon the many bugs in STOS and hopefully produce an even better utility. But surely, you say, STOS is used for arcade games only, not adventures, so who's interested in AMOS? Well try telling that to Gerald Kellett, who's been using STOS recently to create adventure stuff! More than that I cannot say, but look out for the results!!



## COLUMN CHANGES

No sooner had the Pilgrim returned to write AMSTRAD ACTION's adventure column than he decided to leave! His replacement is the unoriginally named Balrog (yawn).

Mike Gerrard spreads his wings meanwhile, and begins a new adventure column for ZERO, a new multiformat magazine - but don't worry, readers of his column in YOUR SINCLAIR, he's still writing that as well. Both columns are well worth checking out.

But what about Tony Bridge (again)? Is he still writing for Popular Computing Weekly since it's recent change of look? Each week I look through the magazine only to note the absence of Tony's column - yet again. Did it appear one week and I missed it? Or has he been given the elbow again? If so, it's a real shame, as "our Tone" is one of the best of the adventure columnists, always keen to spread the word about magazines such as this one and "Adventure Probe". Let's hope he's still there.

Incentive are now selling the complete documentation for the code of STAC - what's more, they're selling it free! This will enable STAC users to write in their own programming routines and create your very own personalized version of STAC, tailored to your adventure writing needs. Yippee! Simply send a stamped self-addressed envelope to INCENTIVE SOFTWARE LTD, Zephyr One, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire, RG7 4QW. (Is this really true? I find it hard to believe!)



## MAY THE FOUR BE WITH YOU

A new collaboration between four renowned adventure columnists has been announced. INTER-ACTION is the name and the four behind it are The Harlequin (ex-Zzap!), Rob Steel (ex-The Games Machine), Auntie Marg (for strategy games) and Nik Wild (ex-Newsfield). The idea is to produce six bi-monthly dossiers a year, 50 pages thick, packed with allsorts of adventurous goodies including reviews, programming help (gulp!) and maps, etc. You can subscribe for a year for £15, which also buys you a newsletter and a weekly telephone helpline. Interested? Then scribble off now to: INTER-ACTION, The Cottage, Ashford Carbonell, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 4DB.





# PAW PRINTS

by George March



I'm beginning this issue with a posthumous dedication to the 'father' of all barbarian adventurers, Robert Erwin Howard (1906 - 1936), who gave life to that golden hero, Conan the barbarian, and to the people who've kept him going these many years hence, L. Sprague De Camp, Lin Carter and Bjorn Nyberg, here's to you all..

Well, after that, how did last month go for you? Mine went pretty awful, as per usual, and I've also been told off slightly by Larry Horsfield (sometime in August) for 'PAW Print's being too straight-laced, too formal and not explaining my routines easily enough (not everyone has the same level of knowledge of PAW, do they?), maybe I'm all facts no fun? (My own words, and I know exactly what he means!) So I'm going to have to start re-thinking my style, but as Larry said in 'Probe' volume 3, number 7, neither 'PAWs for thought', or 'Print's will survive without any help from their readers, so come on you lot! Give a little.. Or a lot if you can spare the time to put pen to paper, lazy lumps! But enough of the sarcastic remarks.. Oh, and by the way, if you're on one of these YTS courses, you have my sincere sympathy! But enough of the moans, and just before I start I'll give a little mention to Mr Darren Rose of Norfolk, for his 'PAW Print's is excellent!' comment in 'Snippets' from 'Coder' number 2, thanks Darren!

So do you remember Larry's column from 'Probe' volume 3, number 4? In which he explained the excellent use of flags to hold the number of objects carried/dropped, worn/removed, or inside of another object, and his new 'inventory' routine, using LET 53 64, for the continuous listing of objects on-screen?

Well here I'd like to offer some slightly different versions of those 'inv' routines, and some totally new and definitely different get all/drop all, etc, routines, but first of all I'd like to re-cap (for those who've never read it, like me, even though I'm writing about it!) some of Mrs Linda Wright (of Marlin Games) routines from 'Adventure Contact' 17.

My many thanks go to both Linda and Larry for this month's 'PAW Print's!

So for Linda's 'Adventure Contact' routines, using the PAW's ability to recognise verbs and nouns above/below a certain value, because any nouns with a number less than 15 are movement words (ie, the names of any directions available), those with a number less than 50, but higher than 19 are the names of people and places, etc, if we use some nouns with a value less than 100, but greater than 49, as object names, and anything else that's described in a message, or location text we give a noun number more than 99, we can come up with some really useful and 'friendly' routines just like these..

So here I've used flag 'A' as a number AFTER that of the last, real, objects number, present in a game, so..

```
GET _ 0 WHATO LT 51 A GT 34 49 LT 34 100 AUTOG NEWLINE DONE
```

Is the noun number (flag 34) given, the name of a real object? (Using WHATO LT 51 A) Then you're allowed to pick it up, I've newlined it just to make it look a bit 'cleaner'!

```
GET _ 1 WHATO LT 51 A GT 34 19 LT 34 50 MESSAGE F NEWTEXT DONE
```

But if the object-noun is the name of a person for example, then message 'F' = 'But \_ doesn't wish to follow you unless invited!', which could always be used with something like 'SAY TO BALROG "FOLLOW ME"'.

GET \_ 2 GT 34 99 MESSAGE G NEWTEXT DONE

And if the noun is an item relevant to a location description, for example a wardrobe in the corner of a room, and so cannot be moved, then message 'G' = 'Sorry, but it will not move, perhaps it is too heavy to lift?'

GET \_ 3 SYSMESS 26 NEWLINE NEWTEXT DONE

With sys' 26 = 'Sorry, but there's nothing like that here!'. Now a variation of some of these GET \_ routines could also be used for some DROP \_ actions, for example..

DROP \_ 0 WHATO LT 51 A GT 34 49 LT 34 100 AUTOD NEWLINE DONE

This first one's just about the same as the GET \_ 0 option above..

DROP \_ 1 WHATO LT 51 A GT 34 19 LT 34 50 MESSAGE H NEWTEXT DONE DONE

With message 'H' = 'But you don't possess anything like a \_ to be able to drop!'

DROP \_ 2 GT 34 99 SYSMESS 28 NEWLINE NEWTEXT DONE

Again, this is nearlyly the same as GET \_ 2, but with sys' = 'But you don't possess anything like that!'

DROP \_ 3 SYSMESS 28 NEWLINE NEWTEXT DONE

I'll freely admit, my DROP \_ routines were entirely based on Linda's GET \_ versions, but they're a compliment to them I hope? Now for those variations on the get all/drop all, etc, routines.. Now the first of these get all commands only works if 'none' of the conveyable objects in a game are in the players present location!

GET ALL 0 ISNOTAT A 255 ISNOTAT B 255 ISNOTAT C 255 MESSAGE D NEWTEXT DONE

And thus, if neither objects A, B or C are at the players current location (flag 255), then message 'D' = 'But there isn't anything here to be able to pick up!' There should be one ISNOTAT action for each conveyable object in a game, using examples A, B and C..

GET ALL 1 MESSAGE E PROCESS A ANYKEY DESC

The routine in response will only go onto the GET ALL 1 action, if there is at least 1 conveyable item in the players present location, and it then moves onto process A and redescribes the screen, which thus 'gets' any objects that are present, with message 'E' = 'You pick up anything you can see!', and for the 'business end' of these routines in process A, we need to keep a constant record of the amount of items being carried and worn, with flag 71 being the amount of objects carried, and for some routines I've got following later, flag 11 the number of things that're worn.. So for process A!

\* \_ 0 ISAT A 255 PLACE A 254 PLUS 71 1

And from the example above, 1 such routine needs to be used for each individual object conveyable in a game, just changing value A into the number of the object concerned.

GET \_ 0 AUTOG PLUS 71 1 DONE

Now for any objects being carried (ie, at location 254, with flag 71 being anything but zero) these next few routines are nearly the same as the GET ALLs above.

DROP ALL 0 ZERO 71 MESSAGE F NEWTEXT DONE

Here, DROP ALL 0 'only' works if the player is NOT carrying anything at all (and flag 71 is thus equal to zero), with message 'F' = 'But you're not carrying anything to be able to drop!'

DROP ALL 1 NOTZERO 71 MESSAGE G PROCESS B ANYKEY DESC

So if flag 71 is anything but zero (ie, the player's carrying at least 1 item), then message 'G' = 'You put down anything you're carrying!' is printed, the routine moves onto process B and the screen is cleared with the next keypress. And now onto process B..

\* \_ 0 ISAT A 254 PLACE A 255 MINUS 71 1

Again there's one such sequence for each individual object! Which takes any items in the carried location and puts them in the players current location.

DROP \_ 0 AUTOD MINUS 71 1 DONE

WEAR ALL 0 ISNOTAT P 254 ISNOTAT Q 254 ISNOTAT R 254 MESSAGE H NEWTEXT DONE

Just like the GET ALL 0 action above, this WEAR ALL 0 routine checks to see whether any wearable items are being carried, if not then message 'H' = 'Sorry, but you don't possess anything that's wearable!'

WEAR ALL 1 NOTZERO 71 MESSAGE J PROCESS C ANYKEY DESC

That last one only works if the player is NOT carrying any wearable items at all (ie, it only comes to this WEAR ALL 1 action, if it bypasses WEAR ALL 0, and the player is carrying at least 1 object, and a wearable item is NOT not-carried, and is therefore at location 254, being carried (logical isn't it? And don't you dare say "No!", Chris!), with message 'J' = 'You put on any wearable objects you're carrying!'. (Eh? - Chris)

WEAR ALL 2 ZERO 71 MESSAGE H NEWTEXT DONE

WEAR ALL 2 only works if the player isn't carrying anything at all, with message H being just the same as for WEAR ALL 0, and now for process C..

\* \_ 0 ISAT P 254 PLACE P 253 MINUS 71 1 PLUS 11 1

So if the player has a wearable object that's being carried, its position is changed to the object-worn location (room 253), a value of 1 is deducted from the flag holding the amount of items being carried, and added to the amount of objects being worn flag!

WEAR \_ 0 AUTOW MINUS 71 1 PLUS 11 1 DONE

And for a REMOVE ? of the same nature..

REMOVE ALL 0 NOTZERO 11 MESSAGE K PROCESS D ANYKEY DESC

Is the player wearing at least 1 object (ie, flag 11 is notzeroed? If so, then message 'K' = 'You take off any items being worn!' is printed, and the sequence then moves onto process D..

REMOVE ALL 1 ZERO 11 MESSAGE L NEWTEXT DONE

With message 'L' = 'But you're not wearing anything to be able to take off!', and now for process D..

\* \_ 0 ISAT P 253 PLACE P 254 MINUS 11 1 PLUS 71 1

The last of these get, drop, wear, etc, routines is..

REMOVE \_ 0 AUTOR MINUS 11 PLUS 71 1 DONE

And for an all purpose 'put object into/remove it from a container' action of the same type, I've used these next few routines to allow a 'wicker basket' to be able to hold upto 7 items and no more (just to make it look a bit more realistic), so if we use flag 15 as the amount of objects being held inside the basket, and object 3 as the basket itself, we can have..

FILL BASKET PRESENT 3 LET 33 L LET 34 M LET 44 N

I've used verb L as the number of the verb PUT, M as the first noun number of the word ALL, and N as the number of the second noun BASKET, which then allows us to have..

PUT ALL 0 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 NOTZERO 71 LET 51 3 MESSAGE O PROCESS E ANYKEY DESC

And so, if the basket is in the same location as the player, and he/she is holding at least 1 object, then message 'O' = 'You put anything you are carrying into the \_!', with flag 51 converting the number of the object given, into the text description of said item, and using that instead of any underlines in text!

PUT ALL 1 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 NOTZERO 71 GT 15 7 LET 51 3 MESSAGE P NEWTEXT DONE

With message 'P' = 'Sorry, but the \_ is far too full to be able to hold anything else!', and for process E..

\* \_ 0 ISAT P 254 LT 15 8 PLACE P 3 MINUS 71 1 PLUS 15 1

So for process E, is any object being carried, and is the amount of objects inside the basket less than maximum, ie, less than 8? If so, location of object number 'P' is changed to be that of 'inside the basket', and the relevant flags are altered!

PUT \_ 0 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 LT 15 8 WHATO LT 51 A EQ 54 254 AUTOP 3 MINUS 71 1 PLUS 15 1 DONE

Likewise for PUT \_ 0 above, if the object mentioned (using WHATO LT 51 A) is less than a number after that of the last real objects number, and is therefore a 'real' object in the game, the relevant objects location is changed to the inside of the container-object, but only if the amount of items inside the container is less than the maximum amount specified (ie, less than 8), and the flags are changed.

PUT \_ 1 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 GT 15 7 MESSAGE P NEWTEXT DONE

This one above, just like PUT ALL 1, checks to see whether the maximum amount of objects is being held within the basket, and if so, prints message P (see PUT ALL 1 for message P), and now, how about this for allowing the player to remove all of the objects held in the basket, in

one go!

EMPTY BASKET PRESENT 3 LET 33 O LET 34 M LET 44 N

Here I've used value O as the number of the verb REMOVE, see FILL BASKET for the values of M and N, which thus gives us..

REMOVE ALL 0 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 NOTZERO 15 LET 51 3 MESSAGE Q  
PROCESS F ANYKEY DESC

If flag 15 is notzero, then there is at least 1 object held inside the basket, if so, then message 'Q' = 'You remove any objects from inside the \_ !', and so onto process F..

REMOVE ALL 1 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 ZERO 15 LET 51 3 MESSAGE R NEWTEXT  
DONE

If flag 15 is zero, then there are no objects at all within the basket, so message 'R' = 'But there's nothing in the \_ for you to remove!', and the following for process F..

\* \_ 0 ISAT P 3 PLACE P 254 PLUS 71 1 MINUS 15 1

Is object P at location 3, and thus 'inside the basket'? If so, then it's placed in the player's 'carried' location, the amount of things carried is added to, and the amount inside the basket reduced by 1..

REMOVE \_ 0 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 NOTZERO 15 WHATO LT 51 A EQ 54 3  
AUTOT 3 MINUS 15 1 PLUS 71 1 DONE

REMOVE \_ 1 NOUN2 BASKET PRESENT 3 ZERO 15 LET 51 3 MESSAGE X NEWTEXT  
DONE

Message 'X' = 'But there's nothing inside the \_ for you to remove!'. Those last two routines don't really need any explanation I think, other than to repeat that flag 15 is the amount of objects inside the basket, and I should also point out that (like the example for object P) 1 such routine should exist for each conveyable object (though items that would be far too heavy for the player to lift in any case, such as a wardrobe for instance, need not be included in this conveyable whatnot process), or in the cases of processes C and D, each wearable/removable object in a game! Also, if the player starts the game off by wearing, or carrying anything, apart from obviously needing to include any such objects in the 'initially-at' table, you'd also need to include a routine like this next one, in process 1..

\* \* ZERO 31 LET 71 2 LET 11 1

So, for the above, if this is the player's first keypress (ZERO 31), and he/she is carrying 2 objects and wearing a third, then make the 'carried' flag equal to 2 and the 'worn' flag equal to 1, or if there are 2 items held in the basket at the start of the game, then the \* \* action above might also include..

\* \* ZERO 31 LET 15 2

And now onto Larry Horsfield's slightly changed 'inventory' commands, for which we'll need to re-write a few of the system messages already held in PAW, so for response, let's change the I \_ routine already there into..

I \_ 0 NOTZERO 71 NOTZERO 11 SYSMESS 11 SYSMESS 9 LISTAT 254 SYSMESS 47

SYSMESS 10 LISTAT 253 SYSMESS 51 DONE

I \_ above only works if the player is both carrying, AND wearing at least 1 object, if so, then the new sysmessage '11' = 'You're ', sysmess '9' = 'carrying ' (don't forget the spaces!), sys '47' = ' and ', and sysmess '10' = 'wearing ', with locations 254 and 253 holding the objects being carried and worn respectively, with sys' 51 being a full stop with a newline after it!

I \_ 1 ZERO 11 NOTZERO 71 SYSMESS 11 SYSMESS 9 LISTAT 254 SYSMESS 51 DONE

The only difference for I \_ 1 is if the player is holding something, but wearing nothing!

I \_ 2 ZERO 71 NOTZERO 11 SYSMESS 11 SYSMESS 10 LISTAT 253 SYSMESS 51 DONE

So that I \_ 1 and 2 only bother to list any objects that ARE being worn, or carried, and will not bother to say something such as 'You're wearing nothing', or 'You're carrying nothing!' for example. But what if the player isn't carrying, or wearing anything at all? (Oooer - Ed)

I \_ 3 ZERO 71 ZERO 11 MESSAGE S NEWTEXT DONE

The message 'S' = 'Sorry, but you don't have anything in your possession at all!'

Well, that's it for another month, ta-ta for now, and as usual for any help you want and/or help you can give to your fellow adventu-writers, please contact me here via the 'Coder', along with any other comments. or my address is.. 93 ROBERTS STREET, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, NE15 6BE

## PAW MARKS

George March answers your PAW problems - this month. how to prevent objects being dropped in a maze.

My god! I've actually had a lovely letter off someone wanting some help - I must be doing something right? At last..

So to begin with, my many thanks go out to Miss Alison York, of somewhere in Bradford (you didn't say where though, Alison?) for my first, and only so far, letter to 'Print's, and at least I think you're a Miss, as you didn't say that either (pity!), you could be a Mrs, or a Ms even if you're the liberated type!

I was delighted to read a friendly, interesting (though sadly a bit short!) letter, the message on the back of your envelope was particularly heartwarming, Alison, I'll treasure it, my very first letter! It was also very helpful that you detailed which type of machine you were using (memory wise), as I may have given you some routines too large for a P.A.W database, which was nearly full already (it's alright for those 128ers with lots of memory to waste!), so as I don't know how much of your memory I'm allowed to fiddle on with, I'm going to keep it down to a minimum, okay, Alison?

It's also a great pity you couldn't have been a bit more specific about what you wanted, but here goes..  
So, if you only wanted your non-drop routines to work in specific rooms, and to work normally in others, you could try..

DROP \_ 0 WHATO LT 34 255 EQ 54 254 ATLT 12 MESSAGE A NEWTEXT DONE

Now these routines must come at the very beginning of any DROP \_ routines you may already have in response, and the rest is easy enough, as the WHATO gives the number of the object mentioned, and if it's a real object (ie, flag 34 is less than 255) and is being carried (is in room 254), and you're also in a room with a number less than, for example, 12, message A is printed and newtexted, which could always work the other way, using ATGT ?, so for ATLT 12, Alison, you'd have to make sure any room that you DO want your DROP \_ to work normally in, have a room number greater than 11, it being 1 less than that used by the ATLT ?

DROP \_ 0 WHATO LT 34 255 EQ 54 254 MESSAGE B NEWTEXT DONE

Which just gives a 'But you'll have to use the \_ somehow, you can't just put it down!' type of message, so that the player would have to find a use for whatever object it was, to use it up, before they could pick up anything else, but it's a horrible trick to play I must admit! So once you've got that you don't need the normal..

DROP \_ AUTOD DONE

Action anymore. Or..

DROP \_ 0 WHATO LT 34 255 EQ 54 254 CHANCE 50 MESSAGE A NEWTEXT DONE

To give the player the disability of only being able to drop whatever they want SOME of the time, and there's always..

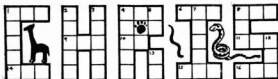
DROP \_ 0 WHATO LT 34 255 EQ 54 254 ATLT 12 PUTO A MESSAGE C DONE

Which could give you a routine something like that used in 'Very Big Cave Adventure', so that another character could come along, steal anything that's dropped, using PUTO A to place anything dropped into room A, the other characters inventory!

I don't know if any of the above are any good to you, but you didn't really tell me what you wanted off me, you did mention your map, but I didn't know if you wanted any hints with it? But if you ever have any problems no matter how small (and that goes for any other readers out there!), for anything at all, or if I haven't given you just what you want here, Alison, please write again and maybe you can be a bit more specific, and tell me just what you want, I'll try and do my best!

So there you go! A whole column just for you, well worth a 20p stamp (yes, it's gone up again!) to get your name in print, just like my one, my only reader so far, Miss Alison York!





"CHRIS" (30/12/86) by Chris Hester. All the across words are animals.

### ACROSS

- 1) Rod Hull's famous bird (3)
- 4) Animal used for bacon (3)
- 6) Minter? (3)
- 8) Sly creature (3)
- 9) Farmyard egglayer (3)
- 10) Sturdy plough-puller (2)
- 11) Carrier of the plague (3)
- 14) Canine (3)
- 15) Kind of antelope (3)
- 16) Feline (3)

### DOWN

- 1) Worse for wear, a bit  
14-across -----? (5)
- 2) ----- and pains (5)
- 3) Mens' toilets (5)
- 4) Inquire adventurously? (5)
- 5) Ancient Chinese game (2)
- 7) Strange (5)
- 8) Animal coat (3)
- 12) Add up (3)
- 13) I (2)

Solution to last month's crossword:-

```

NOTICED HS
OEUCOAN
CULPRITRA
HLTSLPEE
ASTRALN
NAIAVERT
COLONISEA
EESSTAGE
WSRESTED
DIVIDESODE
GNOSUMN
  
```

## LINE ADS

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# TRANSPORT IN ADVENTURES

by Shaun Allaton



## PART II: TAXI!



In my last section I showed how to implement cars into your PAWEd adventure. Basically this section is the same but with a few minor changes and additions. Of course, on this occasion, you don't actually drive the car, that's left upto the cabbie so we'll also have to add some character interaction as well. Also, to make things more realistic, I've made this version so that the player has to pay for the ride (oo-er). If he/she doesn't then they get a black eye and meets our friend in heaven.

### Flags

- 60 - The location of the cab
- 61 - Amount of money the player is carrying
- 52 - Cab fare

### Objects

- 0 - some money

### Messages

- 01 A cab pulls up beside me.
- 02 I was inside a cab, so couldn't call another one.
- 03 One was already here.
- 04 I couldn't call one from here.
- 05 I was already in the cab.
- 06 A cab wasn't here.
- 07 The cabbie wasn't happy with you trying to get away without paying so sends you to that place in the sky.
- 08 Climb out of what?
- 09 Climb into what?
- 10 The cabbie wasn't here.
- 11 "That's "
- 12 " pronounced the cabbie as we reached our destination.
- 13 "We're already here guv."
- 14 "Sorry mate, I don't know where that is!"
- 15 I didn't have any money.
- 16 The cabbie wasn't here.
- 17 You owe him nothing, nothing at all!
- 18 The money amounted to "
- 19 A cab stands before me.

### Process Table 0/Response Table

```
HAIL CAB    NOTSAME 38 60
            ATGT 0
            ATLT 3
            MESSAGE 1
            COPYFF 38 60
            DONE
```

This first command checks that a) the cab is not already in the same location and b) that the player can call a cab from where he/she is standing i.e they are in location 1 or 2. Then PAW tells the player that a cab pulls up and then the location of the player (flag 38) is copied so that the location of the cab (flag 60) is the same.

```
HAIL CAB    AT 3
            MESSAGE 2
            DONE
```

Tells the player they can't call a taxi if already inside one.

```
HAIL CAB    SAME 38 60
            MESSAGE 3
            DONE
```

Basically the same as above but checks to see if the cab is standing next to the player i.e ready for the player to climb into.

```
HAIL CAB    ATGT 3
            MESSAGE 4
            DONE
```

In this demo, if the player is in a location with a higher value than 3 then they cannot call the cab, and are told so.

```
CLIMB CAB   PREP IN
            NOTAT 3
            SAME 38 60
            GOTO 3
            DESC
```

First PAW checks that as well as CLIMB CAB, IN has also been typed in, then PAW checks if the player is in the same location as the cab (SAME 38 60), if so, then the player is moved to location 3 (inside the cab).

```
CLIMB CAB   PREP IN
            AT 3
            MESSAGE 5
            DONE
```

This tells the player that he/she is already inside the cab.

```
CLIMB CAB   PREP IN
            MESSAGE 6
            DONE
```

This tells the player that a cab isn't around.

```
CLIMB OUT   AT 3
            ZERO 62
            COPYFF 60 38
            DESC
```

First PAW checks that the player is inside the cab and that the player doesn't owe any money to the cabbie then it copies the cab's outside location (flag 60) to that of the player (flag 38) and describes the new location.

```
CLIMB OUT   AT 3
            NOTZERO 62
            PAUSE 100
            MESSAGE 7
            PAUSE 100
            END
```

Death routine.

CLIMB OUT NOTAT 3  
MESSAGE 8  
DONE

If the player isn't inside the cab then PAW asks the player: "Climb out of what?"

CLIMB - PREP IN  
MESSAGE 9  
DONE

If the player just types CLIMB IN then PAW asks: "Climb into what?"

PAY CABBI AT 3  
NOTZERO 62  
CARRIED 0  
SUB 62 61  
CLEAR 62  
OK

First off PAW checks that some money is being carried (object 0) then subtracts the amount of the fare from the amount of the money which the player is carrying and then clears the amount of fare due to 0.

PAY CABBI AT 3  
NOTZERO 62  
NOTCARR 0  
MESSAGE 15  
DONE

The player is told that they possess no money.

PAY CABBI AT 3  
ZERO 62  
MESSAGE 17  
DONE

This tells the player that no fare is due.

PAY CABBI NOTAT 3  
MESSAGE 16  
DONE

Tells the player that the cabbie isn't around.

COUNT MONEY MES 18  
PRINT 61  
DONE

Informs the player how much dosh is being carried.

SAY CABBI AT 3  
PROCESS 3  
DONE

If the player is inside the cab then PAW goes to Process Table 3 to check for speech to the cabbie.

SAY CABBI MESSAGE 10  
DONE

Tells the player that the cabbie isn't around.

### Process Table 1

```
* * AT 0
      SET 61
      GOTO 1
      DESC
```

If the player has just started a new game (is at location 0) then set the amount of money being carried to 255 and remember when entering the money in as an object to set it so that it is carried at the start of the game.

```
* * SAME 38 60
      MESSAGE 19
```

If the cab is beside the player then he/she is told so at the end of the location description.

### Process Table 3

```
* * PARSE
```

Gets the speech that the player wishes to give to the cabbie.

```
* OFFIC NOTEQ 60 2
      LET 60 2
      PLUS 62 3
      MES 11
      PRINT 62
      MES 12
      DONE
```

Something I forgot to mention at the start was that the two locations the player can visit are his/her home (location 1) and the office (location 2). This routine first checks that the player isn't already at the office and then drives to the office and tells the player the amount owed and adds it to flag 62.

```
* OFFIC MESSAGE 13
      DONE
```

Tells the player that they are already at the destination.

```
* HOME NOTEQ 60 1
      LET 60 1
      PLUS 62 3
      MES 11
      PRINT 62
      MES 12
      DONE
```

```
* HOME MESSAGE 13
      DONE
```

The above two commands work in the same way as the previous two.

And believe it or not that's it. Quite a long routine but it's effective and I've found it works well.

Next time I'll be looking at how to implement Trains into your FAWes games and like BR, how to make them run late!!

Last but not least I'm looking for adventure games to publish -

(hopefully starting in the early part of next year). At the moment I'm only looking for ones written on the Spectrum and Amiga but, with a bit of luck will be able to expand this to include the CBM 64 and ST as well. If you're interested then drop me a line at the address below and I'll send you full details. It's also the same address if you need any help using PAW.

SHAUN ALLATON, c/o PSYCHO HIPPY SOFTWARE, 61 GOLDCREST ROAD, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK, IP2 0SF.



## QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"The drive mechanism is encapsulated in plastic, and can be slipped in and whipped out as many times as you like. (Honk!)... The graphics on the SAM are spankingly good. (Slap! Yow!)" - *Your Sinclair reviewing the SAM Coupé. (above)*

"The last program on the disk of games was called THE QUEST and I duly loaded this up, plugged in the joystick and waited for the action to start... I had never seen or even heard of an adventure game before so my conclusion was that the game had crashed." - *Mandy Rodrigues on her very first text adventure.*

"If someone from (Adventure) Probe can't help you, then the adventure hasn't been written yet!" - *Mike Gerrard reviewing Probe.*

"People have been declaring the death of the adventure market for years... the 16-bit machines sell more games."\* - *Level 9 out of their tree.*



## Office Chart



- 1) "I Want Your Fax" - George Michael
- 2) "Tippex Machine" - James Brown
- 3) "Temporary Secretary" - Paul McCartney \*
- 4) "Lady Typewriter" - Dire Straits
- 5) "The In-Tray" - Bryan Ferry
- 6) "File Under Forget" - Karel Falcka \*
- 7) "In The Airconditioning Tonight" - Phil Collins
- 8) "Telephone Line" - ELO \*
- 9) "Fax Of Love" - Climie Fisher
- 10) "Celebrate The Wordprocessor" - Womack & Womack

\* real song titles

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# USEFUL PAW ROUTINES

by Darren Rose

## AUTOMATIC EXIT PRINTING

To print all available exits as part of the location description:-

### Process 1

```
- *   MES 100
- S   COPYFF 38 100 LET 33 2 MOVE 100 ADD 100 101
      NOTZERO 100 MES 101
- E   COPYFF 38 100 LET 33 3 MOVE 100 ADD 100 101
      NOTZERO 100 MES 102
- W   COPYFF 38 100 LET 33 4 MOVE 100 ADD 100 101
      NOTZERO 100 MES 103
- N   COPYFF 38 100 LET 33 5 MOVE 100 ADD 100 101
      NOTZERO 100 MES 104
- U   COPYFF 38 100 LET 33 11 MOVE 100 ADD 100 101
      NOTZERO 100 MES 105
- D   COPYFF 38 100 LET 33 10 MOVE 100 ADD 100 101
      NOTZERO 100 MES 106
```

### Messages

```
100 Visible exits -
101 S
102 E
103 W
104 N
105 U
106 D
```

## SWEAR PROTECTION

A very useful feature in an adventure is swear protection. this routine ends the game when a swear word is entered.

### Vocabulary

Put all the swear words you can think of in here as Noun 150.

### Response Table

```
* (swear word) BEEP 10 10 MESSAGE 50 ANYKEY END
```

Message 50 = "Don't swear, just for that you can start again."

## AGAIN

This is another useful routine, used in all professional adventures.

Verb 56 - AGAIN

### Response Table

```
AGAIN * CLEAR 240 EQ 33 56 COPYFF 233 33 COPYFF 234 34
      * COPYFF 243 43 COPYFF 244 44 COPYFF 245 45 SET 240
      * * COPYFF 33 233 COPYFF 34 234 COPYFF 43 243
      * * COPYFF 44 244 COPYFF 45 245
      - - MOVE 38 DESC
      - - LT 33 14 SYSMESS 7 DONE
```

### OOPS!

Another useful command is OOPS so if you make a mistake the game will go back a command when you type it.

```
* * 0 EQ 33 29 RAMLOAD 255 DESC
* * 1 RAMSAVE
```

### CLOCKS

This is a very useful feature for a real-time clock running in memory.

#### Flags used

```
150 minutes
151 hours
152 days
```

#### Process 2

```
* * PLUS 150 1 EQ 150 60 CLEAR 150 PLUS 151 1
      EQ 151 24 CLEAR 151 PLUS 152 1 EQ 152 7 CLEAR 152
```

#### Process 6

```
- - COPYFF 151 153 GT 153 11 MINUS 153 12
- - PRINT 153 MES 2 PRINT 150 GT 151 11 MESSAGE 3
      DONE
- - MESSAGE 4
```

### Response Table

```
LOOK CLOCK MES 1 PROCESS 6 DONE
```

#### Messages

```
1 The time is
2 :
3 PM
4 AM
```

Using this feature I have written routines for shops which open and close, and also for buses and trains that arrive and leave at certain times. At the moment I am writing a routine for characters who arrive and leave and do certain things at specific times.





# COMPETITION!



There's prizes galore to be won in this, our first competition!!!  
Here's the prizes you can win...

TOP PRIZE: £50 worth of software for your computer!!!

SUB-PRIZES (in no order)...

- 1) six months' overseas subscription to "ADVENTURE CODER!", delivered airmail to your door! Worth £13.50!
- 2) copies of "MAGNETIC MOON" or "STARSHIP QUEST" - the fabulous games from Fantasy & Science Fiction Adventures! For Spectrum only.
- 3) copies of other adventure programs yet to be revealed! (Hopefully for C64, Spectrum and Amstrad CPC!)
- 4) a year's UK subscription to "ADVENTURE CODER"! Worth £12!
- 5) C64 disks - adventures and otherwise! Games galore!

There will probably be many other prizes to be won with the prizes above, you'll have to win to find out what! And how, you beg, how do you win?? Well, first off, note that obviously some of the prizes above are worth more than others, so there'll be an overall prize winner, who gets the amazing £50 worth of whatever software they want, followed by other winners who can choose which of the other prizes they'd like.

To win, all you have to do is this! Write me a list of all the words you can make out of the title "ADVENTURE CODER", using only the letters in the title, but in any order you like. For instance, you might come up with "venture" or "code". That's all there is to it! Now study the rules below and get winning!!

## RULES

- 1) You must send me your list, plus a COUNT of the total number of words you've come up with.
- 2) Words using letters not in the title "ADVENTURE CODER" will be dismissed.
- 3) The words must be between one letter and fourteen letters long, with no spaces.
- 4) The closing date is the end of DECEMBER 1989. The results will be made known in the January issue, and the prizes sent off after December. (The Top Prize winner must notify me what software they want before I can send it to them.)
- 5) Don't forget to tell me which computer you use, and what format! E.g: Commodore 64 with disk-drive.
- 6) Anyone is allowed to enter except me!
- 7) Finally, please state which of the sub-prizes you'd LIKE to win. If your list of words is longer than someone else's who wants the same prize, then you'll get it instead of them. The competition is for the largest total number of words you can make from "ADVENTURE CODER".

# ADVENTURE COLUMNS REVIEW

An adventure column is the sign of a great magazine. Shame on all magazines that don't have one! Often the adventure columnist who writes his or her regular spot in a mag rapidly becomes a well-known name, a figure to trust for the latest news and the latest reviews. Name me an arcade reviewer - shucks, there's too many to name. Now name me an adventure columnist - that's right, I read their column too! But they can't all be worth reading - or can they? Let's see, as I compare the major ones, in alphabetical order.

## Balrog

Balrog recently replaced The Pilgrim in AMSTRAD ACTION. Judging by his first column, which sports news on Level 9 and a game review, Balrog's alright!

OVERALL: 7/10

## Brillig

ATARI ST USER readers have Brillig for their adventure columnist. In a way he typifies most of the pseudonymous type of writer - you don't know who they are, so unless a strong character shows through, they might as well all be the same person writing for different magazines! (And probably are!) Personally I prefer someone a bit more down to earth.

OVERALL: 7/10

## Derek Brewster

Derek used to write a regular monthly column in CRASH magazine for several years. I found his column one of the very best, always starting with an excellent piece of comment on the industry. He was never afraid to praise an adventure from a small software house, and even wrote the odd adventure himself, such as "Kentilla". Where is he now you ask? Sadly he departed from CRASH and the last I saw of him was setting up the budget label Zeppelin Games who have yet to release a non-arcade game!

OVERALL: (THEN): 9/10 (NOW): 0/10

## Tony Bridge

Tony has written in Popular Computing Weekly (PCW) for about as long as there have been adventures! He's also contributed to the demised Micro Adventurer magazine. His "Adventure Bridge" column is one of the most respected columns, often dealing with home-grown adventures and magazines. Although he only has a single page, that amounts to four pages a month, so he's on an average with other columnists. However, in recent years, he's failed to appear some weeks, and since the recent redesign of PCW I'm not sure if he still writes there or not! He did leave a while back, but was hastily reinstated due to much public pressure. Although he doesn't give full-blown reviews in the style of other columnists, I feel whatever he writes is well worth reading.

OVERALL: 9/10

## Keith Campbell

Good old Keith has been writing for C+VG ever since it started over 5 years ago! He now also writes for COMMODORE USER and both columns are worth reading, if a little sparse. Somehow they seem to end up identical each month - the same artwork, the same page of readers' helps, and a definite bias towards anything remotely Infocom. This is a shame as often excellent homegrown stuff gets an automatically low mark, just because all Infocom games are always marked at least 90%. However, Keith does review well, and unlike the pseudonym type of columnist, lets himself show through in his reviews, especially when answering readers' questions. Some of his readers are nearly as famous as he is - like the Farrington Fiend for example. I read his column in C+VG long before playing my first adventure, yet it has to be said that he used to have a lot more space in C+VG, often getting a massive Adventure Special in the mag, packed with enough to really get you into the idea that adventures were somehow more than you might think from other magazines. He even used to be helped out by other writers for a massive "all-release" reviewing marathon some months. So long as you haven't played Keith's appalling "Pen & The Dark" adventure, you're safe with him.

OVERALL: 8/10 (used to be 9/10)

## Steve Cooke

Or the "White Wizard" if you prefer. Under that name, he used to write in Personal Computer Games, then ZZAP! magazine for Commodore 64 users but now Steve writes for ACE. Frankly, he was best as Whitey, with a brilliant column in the much-missed PCG. In ZZAP! he seemed to write as little as possible some months, though the reviews were fun to read as here was a pseudonymous reviewer that really stood out - you could just imagine him in his cave, playing away and being fed by his pet monster slaves. Oliver Frey heightened his character with some effective drawings of the bearded wizard himself. Sadly in ACE, he just writes a review and that's that. Often taking up half a page, but perhaps that's an indication of the times rather than him?

OVERALL (as Whitey): 8/10 (as himself): 6/10

## Mike Gerrard

Mike now writes for YOUR SINCLAIR and ZERO. Both columns are superb, with the quality that used to mark Keith Campbell's old pages in C+VG. The writing is humorous but never silly (unlike the rest of YS!) and he seems to be on top of all that's happening in the adventure scene, with, I'm happy to say, a keen eye for home-grown games. His last column in YS even featured a rundown on four adventure magazines - Adventure Coder, Adventure Probe, Spellbreaker and Confidential (part of Official Secrets). You need only to read his reviews of these to see he knows what he's writing about, detailing the exact history of each magazine!! I cannot praise his columns highly enough, they even have superb atmospheric black-and-white illustrations each month. Well done Mike!

OVERALL: 10/10

## The Grue

Let's get this straight: this is not THE Grue of Adventure Probe fame, but a cruel impersonation by Andy Mitchell in AMIGA ACTION.

OVERALL: 7/10

## The Mad Hatter

Readers of THE MICRO USER can sample the words of The Mad Hatter, who must have been writing there for quite a while now. Similar to Pendragon's column, the Hatter's is simple, effective and probably the only place to read about BBC adventures these days.

OVERALL: 7/10

## Andy Moss

Columnist for COMMODORE COMPUTING INTERNATIONAL, Andy writes an interesting column, not that lively, but certainly not dull, though I dislike the presentation. Recommended.

OVERALL: 8/10

## Professor Norman Nutz

Oh dear, yet another stupid pseudonym. Norman writes for ZZAP! and like the White Wizard, seems to write as little as possible, with the barest of intros and predictable reviews. The best thing about his column is perhaps the photographic backgrounds as if each page is on a clipboard, though the coffee-stains sometimes make the text hard to read! At least he's not as over-the-top as his predecessor, Chuck Vomit.

OVERALL: 6/10

## Pendragon

Pendragon writes for ELECTRON USER, or LECY USER as it's known in Liverpool. Although the column is often fairly small, Pendragon writes it well with comments, help and colourful maps to interest the reader.

OVERALL: 7/10

## Paul Rigby

Paul writes in The Games Machine, having taken over from Rob Steel recently. There, he gets probably the best presentation of all the columnists, with a lovely column of shining pink marble at the start. He uses three categories to rate the games under - A for Adventures, R for Role-Playing Games and S for Strategy Games. This means that there are several games reviewed each month, guaranteeing a larger than usual section in the magazine, complete with colour screenshots of most games. Best of all, he's just reviewed Tom Frost's "The Gordello Incident" and given it 93%!!! Keith Campbell would never do that. Paul Rigby is therefore my kind of columnist!

OVERALL: 9/10

## The Sorceress

This person should really be called the Sorcerer as they're male! Still, we don't want to give your brother's game away, do we Mike? The Sorceress writes for SINCLAIR USER, complete with sexist illustrations. Generally a good column, that I can't find much at fault with, but please come out from behind that pseudonym!!

OVERALL: 9/10

# EXTRA LETTER!

Y O U R                      S I N C L A I R

ADVENTURE HELPLINE

14 BATHONE PLACE                      LONDON W1P 1DE

6 October 1989

Dear Chris,

I just wanted to say a quick 'thanks' for continuing to send me copies of *Adventure Coder* magazine -- or if it's Mandy that's responsible, pass the thanks on. Either way, you're the one to be congratulated for reviving the type of magazine that was much needed, and with the help of people like Matthew Conway, Paul Brunyee, George March, Gerald Kellett and others, you're turning out a magazine that I know is of a lot of use to a lot of people.

Watch out for a plug in the next (I hope) issue of *Your Sinclair* -- thugh bear in mind that was written when you'd only just started -- and tell anyone who might be thinking about buying PAKS to be sure to buy the Christmas (January) issue of YS.

All the best,



Mike Gerrard

## APOLOGY

Unfortunately part of Paul Brunyee's article last issue was missing the two markers to sections within the code that should have been marked "A" and "B". I apologise to Paul and other readers who may have been confused over this matter.

The "A" marker was intended to appear on page 27 (see last issue) pointing to the line reproduced below. (12 lines down the page.)

CKNOUN LD    DE.NOUN                      address of noun number

If you like, you could write an "A" pointing to this line on the page. As for the second marker "B", this was meant to appear on the same page, 22 lines down, alongside the line as shown below.

JR    NZ.CKVERB    yes, loop back because HL already bumped along.

CKEND...

The two markers therefore isolate the CKNOUN area. Once again, apologies to Paul Brunyee and anyone else who might have wondered where the markers "A" and "B" were.

# TIME AFTER TIME

by Christopher Hester

Professor Daniel Zweistein awoke with a flash.

"Of course!" he said. "That's it! Of course!" He leapt out of bed and slid a pair of glasses over his face. The clock read five minutes to eight - plenty of time to test the solution that had come to him so clearly as he had woken. Months of hard work had made him a leading scientist in his field, and everyone suspected he was on the verge of completing an invention that would win him the Nobel Prize ten times over. But for the last month, the invention had consistently failed to work. The theories were sound, the practice was perfected, but the results were zero. Time after time. But this time, he knew it would work. He knew he had that one answer that was the 'only possible solution. It seemed so simple - just a rearrangement of the parts - and yet it was a solution that had eluded him for so long.

Zweistein scribbled down the solution hurriedly onto a few scraps of paper, then threw on some clothes, and threw down some breakfast. He left his house and walked across to the street to the campus laboratory. Once inside, there lay the invention. In the light of the solution, it was a hopelessly constructed machine. Nearly every part was in the wrong place. He madly refitted the parts until the machine stood together - neater and more compact than before. He'd never worked so fast before, but time didn't matter - soon, he would have all the time that ever existed!

Click. The machine came to life, purring blissfully. He smiled, then laughed. It worked! But now for the true test...

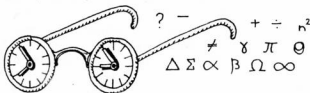
The professor entered a small space at the side of the machine where a chair stood waiting. He sat down and peered through his glasses at the range of assembled dials above a row of switches. He flicked over the switches and set a time display to read 7.55.

Zweistein was so confident that his invention would work, that he hadn't thought to test it first with an inanimate object - he'd test it himself! He could wait no longer.

He glanced at his watch, which read 8.55, then touched the final switch of the machine. A sudden fizzle of energy knocked him unconscious, but the machine had passed the test! And Zweistein had travelled back an hour in time!

He awoke with a flash.

"Of course!" he said. "That's it! Of course!" He leapt out of bed and slid a pair of glasses over his face. The clock read five minutes to eight...



# USEFUL ADDRESSES

|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| AMI - Amiga             | ELE - Electron          |
| ARC - Archimedes        | SPE - Spectrum range    |
| EBC - Acorn EBC Micro   | ST - Atari ST range     |
| C64 - Commodore 64/128  | VAR - various computers |
| CPC - Amstrad CPC range |                         |

## OTHER ADVENTURE MAGAZINES

VAR: Claus Nygaard, ADVENTURE POSTEN, Adventure Klubben, Vestergade, 25A, 4930 Maribo, Denmark.

VAR: Mandy Rodrigues, ADVENTURE PROBE, 67 Lloyd Street, Llandudno, Gwynedd, LL30 2BN.

VAR: INTER-ACTION, (The Harlequin, Rob Steel, Auntie Marg, Nik Wild), The Cottage, Ashford, Carbonell, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 4DB.

SPE tape: MAGIC MISSILE, Futuresoft, 75 Ben Rhydding Road, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, LS29 8RN.

VAR: Mike Brailsford, SPELLBREAKER, 19 Napier Place, South Parks, Glenrothes, Fife, KY6 1DX.

ST disk: SYNTAX, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6LJ.

VAR: CONFIDENTIAL, free to members of OFFICIAL SECRETS, PO Box 847, Harlow, Essex, CM21 9PH.

## ADVENTURE COLUMNISTS

VAR: Steve Cooke, ACE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1 3AU.

AMI: The Grue ("Points Of Grue"), AMIGA ACTION, Latham House, Quarry Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY.

AMI: Dave Eriksson, AMIGA COMPUTING, Database Publications Ltd, Europa House, Adlington Park, Adlington, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

CPC: Balrog, AMSTRAD ACTION, Future Publishing Ltd, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ.

ST: Brillig, ATARI ST USER, Database Publications Ltd, Europa House, Adlington Park, Adlington, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

SPE: The Adventure Column, BASIC, 18 Poplar Close, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 0EN.

C64: Andy Moss, COMMODORE COMPUTING INTERNATIONAL, Croftward Ltd, Finsbury Business Centre, 40 Bowling Green Lane, London, EC1R 0NE.

C64: Gordon Hamlett, COMMODORE DISK USER, Argus Specialist Publications Ltd, Argus House, Boundary Way, Hesel Hempstead, HF2 7ST.

C64/AMI: Keith Campbell, COMMODORE USER, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1 3AU.

VAR: Keith Campbell, COMPUTER + VIDEO GAMES, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1 3AU.

ELE: Pendragon, ELECTRON USER, Database Publications Ltd, Europa House, Adlington Park, Adlington, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

VAR: Paul Rigby, THE GAMES MACHINE, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB.

BEC: The Mad Hatter, THE MICRO USER, Database Publications Ltd, Europa House, Adlington Park, Adlington, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

VAR: Tony Bridge (still there????), POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY, Greencoat House, Francis Street, London, SW1P 1DG.

SPE: The Sorceress, SINCLAIR USER, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1 3AU.

CPC: John Packham, UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP, 60 Hightown Towers, Warburton Road, Southampton, Hants, SO2 6HH.

SPE: Mike Gerrard, YOUR SINCLAIR, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE.

VAR: Mike Gerrard, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE.

C64/AMI: Professor Norman Nutz, ZZAP!, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB.

### ADVENTURE COMPANIES

VAR: ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE LTD, Units 3-6, Baileygate Industrial Estate, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF8 2LN. Telex: 557994 RR DIST G Fax: (0977) 790243 Tel: (0977) 797777

VAR: Philip Bird, ARCON SOFT, 41 Windsor Walk, South Anston, Sheffield, S31 7EL.

C64: DIGITAL DYNAMITE, 54 Watermill Road, Fraserburgh, Grampian, Scotland, AB4 5RJ.

SPE: William Young, GLOBAL GAMES, 4 Kilmartin Lane, Carlisle, Lanarkshire, ML8 5RT.

VAR: Mitch Pomfret, M.S.B GAMES, 2 Bude Close, Braithall, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 2QP. (GAC)

VAR:(no utilities!) MASTERTRONIC, 2-4 Vernon Yard, Portobello Road, London, W11 2DX.

SPE/AMI: Shaun Allaton, PSYCHO HIPPIY SOFTWARE, 61 Goldcrest Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 0GF.

VAR: Rack-It, HEWSON, 56B Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4EX. Tel: (0235) 832939

SPE: John Wilson, ZENOBI SOFTWARE, 26 Spotland Tops, Outgate, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 7NX.

### ADVENTURE UTILITIES/ADD-ONS

SPE: (Genesis) CAMEL MICROS, Wellpark, Willeys Avenue, Exeter, Devon, EX2 8BE.

CPC: (ADLAN) Roger Bankin, GRADUATE SOFTWARE, 14 Forrester Avenue, Weston on Trent, Derbyshire, DE7 2HX.

VAR: (GAC/STAC) INCENTIVE SOFTWARE LTD, Zephyr One, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire, RG7 4QW. Tel: (07356) 77288 Fax: (07356) 6940

VAR: (Quill/PAW) GILSOFT INTERNATIONAL LTD, 2 Park Crescent, Barry, South Glamorgan, CF6 8HD. Tel: (0446) 732765

SPE: (add-ons) Gerald Kellest, KELSOFT, 29 Queen Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 1QS.



# UTILITARIAN

by Gerald T Kellett

This month's column was to have been on the subject of 'The role of sound in adventure games and the feasibility of sound only games for the blind', but just proving that great minds think alike, what did I find on receiving issue 2 of 'Coder', just after I had written the outline, but that Chris had already covered most aspects, except whether and to what extent sound effects can add to the atmosphere of adventure games, I'll leave him to cover that too.

I would like to make the point at the outset that this is not my personal column, feel free to contribute articles of a technical nature concerning adventure creation.

The subject of this month's article then, instead of my original intention, is 'inside info' on GAC, and to answer a few questions passed onto me by Chris from George March.

First the good news, the structure of the databases of CPC and Spectrum versions are almost identical, since there are utilities that can load Spectrum code files into CPCs, (but strangely, as far as I know there are none to enable Spectrum owners to load CPC files), it should be quite feasible to convert one to the other. With only one pointer per data-type requiring modifying to the differences in position in memory, the only possible fly in the ointment is that the picture drawing data is probably different.

Now for the horrors, did you know that, as saved out, a Spectrum GACed adventure contains a copy of the GAC editor, all but some 200 odd bytes that form the menu code, these bytes are copied to the printer buffer, this portion of the editor is then 'zapped' before the adventure is saved out and re-instated afterwards.

This ludicrous situation arises because, firstly GACed adventures are saved-out as one block and the editor is placed between the interpreter and the database, instead of the more logical placing of the interpreter below the database and the editor below the interpreter, GAC could then still have saved out as one block without leaving any trace of the editor in the saved adventure. Any hacker could probably reconstitute a 'free' fully working copy of GAC from most Spectrum GACed adventures.

The structure and program flow of GAC is virtually incomprehensible, full of 'holes' and redundant code and invalid branching. This only makes any sense if there is a vast amount of 'self modifying' code going on, but as I have been unable to follow the flow very far I have never ascertained if this is what is going on. (A unique form of anti-hacking protection perhaps, they give up in disgust at the horrendous programming before they get anywhere). A few 'sillies' I have found are JP and JR to the next instruction, bits of code apparently referring to CPC windows! A plethora of LD A,1 CALL, whereupon A is changed to 2 every time (a botch patch conversion from window 1 on CPC to stream 2 (the upper screen), I think).

Then there is the unnecessary duplication of code to deal with each of the three word tables. Since the start of the verb table is fixed no pointer is used, if it had then one routine could have dealt with all three. Even without this one routine could have dealt with all except the setting the pointer to the correct table instead of three separate and identical ones, only differing by one LD instruction!

Quite a large part of GAC (all versions I'm fairly certain), concerning the execution of the Condition tables, look for all the world like 'tweaked' FORTH. This is the cause of the infamous 'disappearing brackets' problem. The condition lines as entered are a mixture of prefix and infix forms, however GAC stores them in what I can only describe as 'not quite reverse Polish notation' (reverse Polish notation is a form of mathematical notation where all the

numbers to be acted on are placed first, with all the functions to act on them following, in a sequence that excludes all ambiguity without recourse to brackets, both FORTH and the early Sinclair Scientific Calculator use it). It is the 'not quite' that causes the brackets to be lost when a condition line is converted back into 'GAClish' for editing.

If true reverse Polish notation had been used all brackets would have been stored in implied form, and while the extra brackets affect the ordering of items as stored, only some are encoded implicitly, the others should have been encoded explicitly (with an 'op-code' for parenthesis).

This has an interesting inference, if you can persuade GAC to encode the brackets, not only can you retain their action even after coding, but you can get it to do things its not supposed to. HOW? By using NOT(NOT( )), this encodes the brackets (twice) while retaining the boolean value of any conditions contained within them. If you can 'invert' the logic of the conditions to be placed within, then only one NOT() need be used. What it also allows you to do is to have more than one comparison operator in a condition, something which extra brackets don't allow.

Other 'yuks' are the 'clogged dictionary' problem, which all versions suffer from (can someone tell me if STAC does?), and peculiar to the Spectrum is that 25 extraneous bytes are tacked onto the end of each object descriptor, doesn't sound much, except that if all 256 objects are used, 6.25K is wasted!

Anyone who uses 'RECLAIMER' will know that even though it works in machine code it takes a noticeable amount of time even when no redundant words are present, and this lengthens as the text and dictionary grow. This delay would admittedly be unacceptable if it occurred at each message or word edit, but that's no reason for not having such a 'garbage collection' function that 'RECLAIMER' provides as a menu option.



Now to answer George's Questions, as to whether some of the add-ons suggested in the GAC Co-product survey included with issue 1, could be provided for PAW.

There is already a 'cut-&paste' facility available, at least as far as the Process Tables are concerned, it's called 'PAW-PHOSIS', one of the user overlays in the PIM package. I was working on a word processor overlay which would allow text to be treated likewise. But I suppose he wants to 'cut & paste' any data, ie the connection tables, object word/start/weight & type, and graphics items and vocabulary too. Indeed it would have been nice to provide all these in 'PHOSIS', but with only 5K to play with this was not possible.

I might add them to the Utilities overlay, which already has search and replace functions (ie 'PAW-TEL's LIST, SEARCH & HUNT with replace) and overlay manipulation. (But don't hold your breath, Gilsoft are not enthusiastic to publish any-more overlays at present).

It would be fairly easy for objects to be referred to by their adjective and noun as given in the object word table. With GAC tokenising all it's text on input, finding a match for a message-entered MESS "message text" would be straight forward, with PAW storing text either as full ascii, or tokens or a mixture of both this would not be so easy.

I agree, PAW should have had an ellipse drawing command, if GAC which preceded it could have one, Gilsoft should have provided PAW with it.

Finally some additions to my previous article. I meant to mention that the addition of having named game position saves was as a result of the implementation of the 'user transparent storage media handling', since disc systems don't allow unnamed headerless files, so tape users get to name their files too in order that things operate consistently whichever you are using. Regarding 'Bloodstone', I presume that examining objects would work in the logical and straight-forward manner of listing all the items in the next layer of sub-objects in the sub-object hierarchy .



## THREE FOR A START

by Gerald T Kellett

Here is a word puzzle, nine words all starting with the same three letters, can you find them from the, fairly, straight forward clues?

- |                      |                                     |                              |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) Adjoining to.     | 2) Gain goal.                       | 3) Try to.                   |
| 4) Taking notice of. | 5) Aide.                            | 6) Opposites are reputed to. |
| 7) Diminish.         | 8) A war to the bitter end is such. | 9) Apportion to.             |
| 1)                   | 2)                                  | 3)                           |
| 4)                   | 5)                                  | 6)                           |
| 7)                   | 8)                                  | 9)                           |

## BACK ISSUES

### ISSUE 1 July 1989

GAC+ review! PAW Prints! Machine Coding your adventures Part 1! Whatever happened to... "Valley Of The Source"! GAC graphics article on Colour, Perspective, Ellipses and Rectangles etc! Fiction - "The Burning Man"!

### ISSUE 2 August 1989

GAC pokes! GAC+ pokes! Two crosswords! PAW Prints! The Ultimate Guide To Gacing! Machine Coding your adventures Part 2! Whatever happened to... sound-only games! STAC - Special Condition 17 etc! The Adventure - how to write one! Updated utilities list! Updated useful addresses list!

### ISSUE 3 September 1989

The A-2 of RPG! Transport in adventures - the car! Paw Prints! Solutions to crosswords from issues 1 and 2! Doors in GAC adventures! STAC article 2! Controversial holiday chart! Machine Coding your adventures part 3! Investigating PAW! More pokes!

# UTILITIES AVAILABLE

AMI - Amiga  
 ARC - Archimedes  
 BBC - Acorn BBC Micro  
 C64 - Commodore 64/128  
 CPC - Amstrad CPC range

ELE - Electron  
 SPE - Spectrum range  
 ST - Atari ST range  
 VAR - various computers

| <u>PROGRAM NAME</u>        | <u>COMPANY (COMPUTERS)</u>    | <u>COMMENT</u>         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| ADL                        | Public Domain (AMI)           |                        |
| ADLAN                      | Graduate (CPC)                |                        |
| ADVENTURE BUILDER SYSTEM   | M A Richards (SPE)            |                        |
| ADVENTURE CREATOR          | W. Mitchell (SPE)             | Games Computing Feb'85 |
| ADVENTURE CONSTRUCTION SET | Electronic Arts (C64)         |                        |
| ADVENTURE KERNEL SYSTEM    | Melbourne House (AMS)         | book listing/tape      |
| ADVENTURE WRITER           | Codewriter (C64)              | USA Quill              |
| ADVENTURESCAPE             | A&B (BBC)                     |                        |
| ADVSYS                     | Public Domain (ST)            |                        |
| ALPS                       | Alpine Software (BBC MTR ARC) |                        |
| AMIGAVENTURE               | Public Domain (AMI)           |                        |
| THE BIRO                   | Ramjam Corporation (many)     | in-house/to loan       |
| CHARACTER SETS             | Simicro (SPE)                 | GAC                    |
| CHARACTERS                 | Gilsoft (SPE)                 | Quill                  |
| DRAGON WRITER              | Cowen (DRG)                   |                        |
| DUNGEON BUILDER            | Dream (C64)                   |                        |
| THE EXPANDER               | Gilsoft (SPE)                 | with PRESS             |
| FONT CREATOR               | Simicro (SPE)                 | GAC                    |
| THE FIX                    | Kelsoft (SPE)                 | Quill                  |
| GAC                        | Incentive (SPE AMS C64)       |                        |
| GAC+                       | Incentive (C64)               | disk-only              |
| GAC DATABASE PRINTER       | Big Sky (C64)                 |                        |
| THE GACPAC                 | Essential Myth (SPE)          | GAC                    |
| GENESIS                    | CRL/Camel Micros (SPE)        | In The Cage!           |
| THE ILLUSTRATOR            | Gilsoft (SPE AMS C64)         | Quill                  |
| MEGA                       | Gilsoft/Kelsoft (SPE)         | PAW, part of PTM       |
| MINIFIX                    | Kelsoft (SPE)                 | Quill                  |
| PATCH                      | Gilsoft (SPE)                 | Quill                  |
| PAW                        | Gilsoft (SPE AMS PC)          | no C64/ST!             |
| PAW-PHOSIS                 | Gilsoft/Kelsoft (SPE)         | PAW, part of PTM       |
| PAW-TEL                    | Gilsoft/Kelsoft (SPE)         | PAW, part of PTM       |
| PRESS                      | Gilsoft (SPE)                 | Quill                  |
| PTM                        | Gilsoft/Kelsoft (SPE)         | 3 PAW overlays         |
| QUAID                      | Kelsoft (SPE)                 | Quill                  |
| THE QUILL                  | Gilsoft (SPE AMS C64)         |                        |
| RECLAIMER                  | Kelsoft (SPE)                 | GAC                    |
| SAGA                       | Scott Adams (C64)             | not for sale!          |
| THE SCRIBE                 | Your Spectrum (SPE)           | listing                |
| STAC                       | Incentive (ST)                |                        |
| TAC                        | Incentive (BBC ELE)           | GAC without graphics   |
| TAILSPIN                   | Microdeal (ST AMI)            |                        |

